



NEWS RELEASE

GOVERNOR'S COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

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BREDESEN LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES

Governor Recruits Eddie George to Lead "GetFitTN" Initiative

Nashville - Governor Phil Bredesen has launched a new health and wellness awareness campaign, GetFitTN, aimed at the prevention of Type 2 diabetes, commonly known as adult onset diabetes, and to promote healthier, more active lifestyles among Tennesseans.

"At its roots, GetFitTN is an opportunity for all Tennesseans to improve their lifestyles by making a modest increase in physical activity - regardless of age, social status, race or ethnic background," said Bredesen. "To have a real impact on the health and the quality of life of future generations of Tennesseans, we must address Type 2 diabetes now and some of the risk factors that lead to it, like obesity and inactivity. I'm pleased to have Eddie George driving this initiative to encourage all Tennesseans to 'get fit'."

Former Tennessee Titan All-Pro running back and Heisman Trophy winner, Eddie George, has joined Bredesen's TeamTN as the spokesperson for GetFitTN.

"As a father and an athlete, proper nutrition, exercise and overall health awareness is very important to me," said George. "In fact, it's something I live everyday. I was asked by Governor Bredesen to lend my voice to GetFitTN, and I consider it my honor to do so. I want to inspire others to take their health seriously and, in turn, live longer, healthier lives."

In his role, George will travel throughout the state over the next nine months promoting fitness and nutrition to at-risk groups. Along with Governor Bredesen, he will encourage all citizens, particularly children, to join TeamTN and commit to a healthier lifestyle.

Published statistics from the United States Department of Health & Human Services, Project Diabetes, and FoodFit.com include:

- Type 2 diabetes is preventable and/or can be delayed through modest changes in lifestyle that include increased physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight.
- Of children born in 2000, one in three are predicted to develop diabetes. The odds increase to one in two for African-Americans and Hispanics.
- The average child gets less than 15 minutes of vigorous activity a day.
- Overweight children have a 70 percent chance of becoming overweight adults.
- Americans spend billions each year purchasing diet books and products in an effort to be healthier.

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Recently, Bredesen outlined a two-tiered diabetes prevention strategy, known as Project Diabetes and Coordinated School Health, which includes \$22 million in grants to be used to increase public awareness and expand existing initiatives to prevent Type 2 diabetes in adults and children. Portions of these grants have been specifically earmarked by Bredesen to launch GetFitTN.

Susan Cooper, Bredesen's coordinator for Project Diabetes and director of the Health Care Safety Net devoted to meeting the health care needs of uninsured Tennesseans, will also be an active member of TeamTN. Cooper, a registered nurse, will use her extensive nursing background to lend medical expertise and cooperation from the state to the program. At the request of the Governor, Cooper has taken a leave of absence from her role as the Assistant Dean for Practice for Vanderbilt University's School of Nursing to help shape and support Tennessee's health programs.

GetFitTN is a statewide awareness program developed by Governor Phil Bredesen to address the rising epidemic of Type 2 diabetes. This initiative is aimed at educating both adults and children that proper nutrition and physical fitness can prevent or significantly delay onset of the disease. For more information on GetFitTN, visit www.GetFitTN.com.

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